


		<div>EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE: 1—Official Business 2—Necessarily Absent 3—Illness 4—Other</div>
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may very well have a large impact on United States military expenditures and commitments. Depending on the type of Strategic Concept that is adopted, adding new members may or may not be beneficial to United States interests. Further, for those new nations, it may or may not be in their own interests to join. It would not make sense for current members to invite new countries to join, and it would not make sense for new members to want to join, until NATO had defined its mission. Therefore, we have offered the Bingaman amendment, which would require the United States to adopt as its official policy that it will not support new members until after the current review of the Strategic Concept is completed. We urge our colleagues to support this prudent amendment.

Those opposing the amendment contended:

With all due respect, this amendment is just a replay of the Warner amendment which the Senate earlier rejected. The sole purpose of this amendment is to slow down the admission of new members by imposing an arbitrary moratorium. In this case, countries that wished to join would have to wait until NATO published its new little blue-and-white book containing its revised Strategic Concept. As our colleagues have inaccurately described it, this book will cause a seminal change in NATO's course. The reality is far different. NATO's strategic concept is under constant review, both formally and informally. Since 1991, it has been changed by the creation of bodies such as the Partnership for Peace, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the NATO-Russian Founding Act, and the NATO Ukraine Commission. It has also changed significantly due to sharp reductions in its conventional and tactical nuclear armed forces. The new statement will not chart a new course; it will reflect current reality as members now see it. Further, the United States will retain its leadership role and its veto authority. We think that an appropriate analogy would be to compare the accession of new members to NATO to the process that has been used when adding new States to the United States. There has never been a requirement to delay statehood during times that constitutional amendments have been under consideration. Similarly, we should not impose that type of artificial delay on prospective NATO members. If they are ready to join, and if members want to admit them, they should not have to wait. We therefore oppose this amendment.